

is to be without adequate foodstuffs. Can you imagine what it would be like in this current crisis if we were dependent on imported food for our own population's needs? How much more serious would the current crisis be if we did not have a strong agricultural base in America? How much more vulnerable would we be if every day's food supply or some substantial part of it had to be brought in from other countries?

This is serious business. This administration's endorsement of a radical and ruinous farm plan must be resisted, must be defeated. We must do better.

I hope very much that before this year is out, we will have passed a farm program that will make a difference in the lives of the tens of thousands of farm families who are the backbone of the strength of America. Those are the people who are the builders. Those are the people who are right at the heart of making this country strong and great.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, before my colleague from North Dakota leaves the floor, there is something worth pointing out. I don't claim to have great knowledge about the farm bill. I am from a consuming State. We have our farmers in Connecticut, not to the extent they do in the Midwest—obviously the Farm Belt of the country—but they play a very important role. As consumers, of course, it is very much in our interest that we encourage domestic production of agricultural products.

Many of us were told the other day something that maybe I had known before, but in the context of September 11 and the events that occurred since then, it surprised me I hadn't thought about it. I must mention it here and ask my friend for a response.

I was stunned to learn, once again, that less than 1 percent of all the food that we import is inspected. Again, we were talking about all the other problems we face, but I was sort of taken aback by the fact that such a tiny percentage of the produce or products we as Americans consume that comes from offshore—and many do, particularly in cold-weather months, particularly we import an awful lot of food from overseas—we are not talking about stopping that, but it seems to me in the context of what the Senator is talking about, a farm bill, it is in all of our interests, whether you are from a farm State or not—putting that issue aside but with that issue in mind—we would not be doing everything we could to encourage domestic production of our food supplies.

I don't know if he had any comments he wanted to make in that regard. It struck me that this would be an important point to raise at this time.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank my colleague from Connecticut for raising the issue. We were in a briefing the other day. Representatives from the administra-

tion were alerting us to a vulnerability of this country. They were making the point the Senator has made, that we are only inspecting about 1 percent of the foodstuffs that come into this country. That represents a vulnerability for America.

I say to my colleagues, if this farm plan were to pass, the vulnerability of America would increase geometrically. This is the most radical farm plan ever endorsed by any administration in my memory. I am 53 years old. I have followed farm policy very closely all of my life, being from a farm State. It is breathtaking what this administration has said we should put in place.

It is absolutely the wrong plan at the wrong time, and we must reject it.

I thank my colleague very much for his input.

Mr. DODD. I thank my colleague. I have found in my years of service with the distinguished Senator from North Dakota, every time he proposes something in the area of agriculture, I follow. I have found myself to have a good record on farm policy because of his leadership. I thank him for his comments today. He not only speaks for his own State and region of the country; he speaks for all Americans who care about this most critical issue.

BEST PHARMACEUTICALS FOR CHILDREN ACT

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, earlier today this body passed, by unanimous vote, the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act. This is a bill I authored a number of years ago with my good friend from Ohio, Senator **MIKE DEWINE**. He is presently occupied at a Judiciary Committee hearing, and he will come to the floor and offer his own statement. I ask unanimous consent that whatever time he seeks, the Chair would provide him with an opportunity to be heard on this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Ohio. He has been a great partner in numerous efforts we have made together on behalf of children. S. 838 is something for which both of us are tremendously proud, the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act.

Let me briefly describe the bill, why it is a bit different than the bill we passed 3 years ago, and why it is important.

This bill would reauthorize the pediatric testing incentive legislation we passed in 1997 as part of the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act. This important program has gone a long way toward ensuring that doctors and parents have the most up-to-date and critical information on medications for our children. It has been an important achievement.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, about 20 percent—I think a little less—of the drugs on the market have been tested and labeled specifically for their safety and effective-

ness for children. Children are simply not smaller versions of adults, as I hope most people are aware.

The bodies of infants, toddlers, and adolescents are very different and react very differently to drugs than adults do. The absence of pediatric labeling poses some very significant risks for children. Without adequate information about how a drug works in children of different ages and sizes, they are more likely to be either underdosed or overdosed or to experience dangerous side effects.

Mr. President, again, years ago—in fact, in fairly recent history—there were a lot of products out there for adults and children, but for many years there were just the basics, and parents, over the years, would take the old family aspirin and the children's dosage was to cut it into quarters or halves and take it. It was pretty safe. Nobody suffered terribly. Trying to calculate a child's dosage of traditional medicines in times past was not that difficult. There were some hazards. But we have seen a wonderful explosion of new products.

I note the Senator from New Jersey is presiding. Both in his State and mine, we have literally thousands of constituents who have dedicated their lives to the research and development of products to make us all healthier, live better lives, and live longer.

In the process, however, only about 20 percent, as I mentioned—a little less—have actually been tested and designed to serve children's needs. Despite the fact that children represent in excess of one-quarter of the population of this country—25 percent—only a tiny fraction of the products on the shelves to be prescribed by doctors are actually labeled and designed to meet their needs. It seems sort of staggering to me that we have waited so long to do this. We have labels on the food that children can eat. We now have labels on the music to which they listen. We have labels that will tell you what movies you ought not to let your child go to. But when it comes to pharmaceutical products, we have very little of that.

With that as a background, Senator **DEWINE** and I, in 1997, as part of the Food and Drug Administration modernization bill, crafted this legislation as a way to see if we could not induce—there was a debate on whether we should mandate it and say you have to do it whether you like it or not, which is one approach, or should we say we will give you a chance to prove to us you can do it by providing 6 months of exclusivity in the marketplace. There was a debate about that.

I had my own doubts about whether or not this was going to work very well. I must say the success of this legislation has been beyond anyone's wildest imagination. If I can, I will share some of the comments made about the success of the 1997 act, which would go out of existence, by the way.

Why did we need to pass this legislation, and why am I so appreciative of